Surára
Pakidái

/72 cont./

766 The ceremony for an old person is entirely different. After death has set in, his head is chopped off and is hung, likewise in a little wooden rack, in the crown of a tree, again 15 or 20 minutes away from the maloka. The body, however, is buried in the ground in the jungle without ceremony, and, to be sure, in a squatting position, bound tightly with lianas. This is supposed to prevent its possible return, for it would have dire consequences for the tribe. The head, however, is burned on a small pyre, under [975] the same circumstances as described above, so that the soul may reach the moon in the ascending smoke; the remaining bone ashes are also kept.

769 The reason for the different obsequies for younger and older
● 888 persons is the following: At the big annual ceremony in memory
266 of the dead, which is held jointly with the Surára (see pp. 222 ff.), all the men drink the bone ashes of their deceased relatives, mixed with banana soup, because they believe that in this way the vigor and spirit of the dead remain within the tribes. In the case of old people, however, it is assumed that their bodies are already too leached out for their ashes to be able to transmit strength any more. Only the bone ashes of the head are still regarded as valuable.

888 If members of the tribe are very old or so seriously ill that, in spite of all efforts to cure them, they are no longer able to take part in the joint migrations, they are killed. For this purpose there takes place beforehand a gathering of the chief and older, more experienced men, at which they choose a participant who has to perform the killing. He uses a stick for this and, while the person in question is asleep, beats him hard on the head several times, until he has breathed his last (333). These tribal

[971]

333. Old and sick people are killed in similar manner among the Ipurina. "Moribund persons," writes Ehrenreich, "are said to be dispatched to the other world not infrequently by sorcerers by means of club-blows" (Ehrenreich, 1891,

Surára
Pakidái

/72 cont./

888
[191]

333. (cont.)
p. 70). Among the Piaroa Indians very weak old people are walled up alive in a cave. They are given food and drink for several more days and, when this has been used up, die of enervation (Marquis de Wavrin, 1944, pp. 197/98).

members destined for death are thus dispatched into the other world in an altogether humane manner, and even the killing itself is dictated by humane impulses. Since these old and sick persons can, of course, no longer take part in the customary seminomadic way of life, they would be obliged to remain helplessly behind when the tribe sets out on a new migration. This is to be prevented, however, /73/ and at the same time it is desired that the way to the moon, the paradise of the dead, be opened for them. After their death, they are cremated in the same way as all other deceased persons, that is to say, in the case of old people only the head is burned, and their ashes, too, are preserved and drunk at the festival in memory of the dead.

888
766

775 Greater than the fear of death among all Surára and Pakidái is the thought that they might one day die without being cremated, for example, during military actions, for then the entrance into the moon is barred for their soul (see p. 198).

766
[684]
[184]

Persons who commit incest are excluded from cremation after their demise, and they are not mourned, for incest is regarded as the greatest crime. Poré (see p. 197) does not want their souls on the moon, and partaking of their bone ashes would exert unfavorable influences on the male members of the tribe. They are therefore tied up in a squatting position and buried in a hole in the ground.

766
858
774

If children die before the completion of the third year of life, they are thrown into the river without any ceremony, since they belong to the flesh and blood of the mother and do not yet have their own soul (see p. 138).

/116 cont./

593 he soon loses all desire for further mistreatment. The other members of the tribe watch such a spectacle with interest. Moreover, it is worth noting that most of the women are very energetic and can scold with persistence. If a woman is angry with her husband, perhaps because he was unfaithful or did not go hunting, she will often scold loudly to herself for hours, so that all the other occupants of the maloka hear every word. [592] Meanwhile, however, the man being scolded remains lying in hammock in stoic calm, for a scolding woman may never be 598 interrupted. But between women, too, there are sometimes regular cannonades of vituperation carried on with the greatest vocal display. I always had the impression that at any moment they would come to blows. Sometimes this actually happens. Then they pull one another by the hair and strike each other in the face and on the rest of the body with the hands. /117/ In this case, other women do not interfere, nor do the men. Everybody watches calmly and waits until the scuffle is over.

855 Children are treated with special love and tenderness. In most cases, they show their gratitude to their parents by bestowing upon them everlasting affection. I never saw old people neglected (559). If they became so weak and ill that they were

[171]

559. Baldus also reports of the Tapirapé that the old people are very well treated there (Baldus, 1956, p. 603), whereas later Giacone paints a very gloomy picture in this respect about the Tukano: "Entre os índios dêsses rios, a condição dos velhos é das mais penosas .... Poderiamos dizer, sem medo de errar, que o velho ou a velha, quando não pode mais trabalhar para a família, é considerado como bananeira que já deu cacho, e ninguem terá compaixão deles... /Among the Indians of these rivers the situation of the old people is most painful .... We might say, without fear of error, that the old man or old woman, when

Surára
Pakidái

/117 cont./

888
[171]

559. (cont.)
no longer able to work for the family is regarded like a banana tree that has already produced the fruit, and no one pities them.../" (P. Giacone, 1949, p. 25).

no longer able to take part in the general migrations, however, they were killed, in accordance with the tribal custom (see pp. 153/154).

829
[159]

The friendly, open nature of all Surára and Pakidái is coupled with a very strongly marked self-assurance. Along with their allies, above all the mighty Xiriána, they feel like rulers of the world, which, in their opinion, consists only of virgin forest, mountains, rivers, and lakes. The caboclos (planters, rubber and palm-fiber gatherers), the only members of civilization whom they know, are therefore always treated with a certain compassionate condescension by them, for they are of the opinion that all civilized persons, whites, blacks, and mixed, are weak and powerless and owe their lives solely to the benevolent
000 forbearance of the Indians (560). When I told them about cities

[171]

560. Baldus found similar conceptions among tribes of the northeastern Chaco (Baldus, 1931, p. 114), as did Métraux among the Kayapó /Cayapo/. (Herr Prof. Métraux told me this during the meeting of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Völkerkunde in Berlin, 1957.)

123 when I told them about cities
829 in which many white and black people live, of the sea and the big ships sailing on it, they could not grasp this at first and then became very thoughtful. Later, at my departure, they urged me not to travel too far out on the ocean so that I would not fall off the earth-disk (see p. 197).

/118 cont./

153
191

563. (cont.)
Steinen about the Suya on the Xingú, in which he declares that these Indians knew how to use the pencil very well and drew beautiful motifs in his notebook, although he was the first white man they had seen (Karl von den Steinen, 1886, p. 212).

153
[177]
[191]

Younger people are distinguished by a gift for rapid comprehension and an astonishing learning capacity. Although these Indians very rarely come in contact with caboclos, and in most cases only the men, both sexes have at their command a rather large store of Portuguese words and figures of speech. One little
124 Surára boy about nine years old, Jubeauwõ, also called Mandú,
159 who had spent almost two years in the hut of the palm-fiber
[191] gatherer Manuel Antonio Gõmez on the Rio Aracá, had a nearly perfect command of the Portuguese language and performed unique service as my interpreter. I owe it to him alone that I was able to penetrate more deeply into the mental culture of the Surára and Pakidái and put together a complete vocabulary (564).

159
734
752

564. Three years ago the little boy suffered dangerous burns on the abdomen by an upset vessel containing boiling tree resin. Since the chief had given up hope that he would recover, he wanted to have him given the deathblow. The custom of this tribe, as well as that of the Pakidái, decrees that all old and seriously ill persons who are no longer able to take part in the general migrations must be killed (see pp. 153/154). The grandmother of the little boy, who is an orphan took him secretly one night to the hut of the Spanish palm-fiber gatherer,

[888]

/214 cont./

554 him to commit a similar excess. In their traditional duels no one dares to fight with the guapo, for they are afraid that in the heat of the encounter he may lose control of himself and kill
[621] his adversary. Apparently there is only one guapo in each local group, and, from what can be seen, he may have the social mission to eliminate the weak elements in the group, in spite
554 of his not realizing that that is his function. It was explained to us,
769 for example, that on occasion the neighboring group is invited to
628 the feast of the dead, when, the ashes reduced to fine powder,
[266] they ingest those of their dead companions. This invitation is extended to the enemy group in particular if it is known with certainty that among the dead whose ashes they are about to take there is one who died through the magical intervention of a member of the enemy band. During the ceremony the sablí shaman, before opening the gourd which contains the ashes, points out to the guapo of his group the probable murderer in the opposite band, who, in order to avoid complications, is always the weakest man in the group. The feast proceeds as though nothing had happened, but the enemies who lost the man during the feast invite their adversaries to celebrate the feast of their dead also.

554 Old people, for their part, do not seem to be very safe be-
[888] fore this element, /215/ and some Sanemá of the Ventuari ex-
[574] plained that the guapo must treat visitors in this way in order to prove his courage. It would be interesting to know in greater detail the function of the Sanemá guapo and to find out whether these are isolated cases or a traditional phenomenon.

842 The Sanemá believe that the child exists in the father,
162 who passes it to the mother so that it may grow and be born. In the Sanemá communities which we visited on our expedition
855 we were surprised at the small number of children to be found in the settlement. The parents showed much affection for their children, and when these latter have grown somewhat they participate, to the degree that their age and strength allow, in all the activities of the adults.

881 It seems that they are acquainted with rites indicatory of
~~000~~ the onset of puberty for a boy or girl. The first menstrual period

844 123 /489 cont./ They also invited us to do this, but, not knowing the meaning of the practice, we declined to do so.

846 After this, the mother took the little creature and went off to her house. There she rested for two or three days before resuming her work in the "conuco."

844 Later, another child was born at night. We were not there, but we were informed that it had been born in the house, to which green leaves were brought for the birth.

Puberty

881 To reach puberty is an important event, especially for the girls. It is considered that the girl has reached puberty at her first menstruation. Her mother, older sister, or another woman who might be her guardian gathers leaves and builds a wall around her hammock to isolate her from everything. For approximately one week, the girl never leaves this area. Her mother brings her food, water, firewood, and any other things which might be needed.

At the end of this retirement, the girl comes out, adorned with flowers, leaves, cotton belts, strings of beads, and feathers.

Maturity

885 622 A man is considered mature when he has marriageable children. The head of a settlement is frequently a grandfather, but sometimes the settlement may be governed by a somewhat younger man.

Old Age

●888 Retirement from active life is somewhat gradual, depending upon the strength of the individual.

Old persons are respected, but they are no longer leaders in the affairs of the settlement. They are cared for even when they are no longer capable of contributing to their own support. /Plates I-V follow./

484 plantains to eat en route. Most of the time they did not even carry their hammocks, as these could be easily manufactured from bark strips in a matter of minutes.

462 935 Women make several kinds of baskets, including ones to carry the family possessions when the group moves. When the entire village moves, progress is slow and only a few miles are covered each day. The reason for this is that 838 958 955 older people and those who are sick travel very slowly, children must be carried by their parents, and food in large quantities must be transported to provision the moving group. Thus, a trip that a group of young men could easily make in one day would require two or three days if the entire village moved that distance.

415 323 The only non-portable[1] (as well as the only durable) item made by the Yąnomamö is a large, heavy, poorly fired 84 443 clay pot. These are manufactured by only a few villages, which serve as trading centers for this industry. They are 462 422 562 made by men and are their property since women are too clumsy to be permitted to handle and use them and would probably break them. When a pot does break, the fragments are used as mortars for grinding drugs, small stone celts, found in the woods by the Yąnomamö, serving as pestles. The larger fragments of a broken pot are used as cooking plates in the 199 manufacture of cassave bread. Despite the fact that most of the Yąnomamö villages have not been contacted directly, the

---

[1]The pots are concealed in the garden when the group moves.